

FEB 12, 1992
PD



PO/ROADELL HICKMAN

For the second time in four months, Sara Ogle, 3, has tested positive for elevated levels of lead in her blood. Last fall, lead-tainted soil was discovered in her Holmden Ave. back yard. Part of the yard is fenced off, in the background.

Lead level still high in toddler's blood

By TOM BRECKENRIDGE
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

CLEVELAND

Sara Ogle, 3, still has lead in her blood, two months after workers scraped tons of lead-tainted soil from the back yard of her Holmden Ave. home.

Sara isn't allowed in the back yard. Her mother and grandmother dust and vacuum daily. They've pulled up carpets in two rooms. And Sara still has elevated levels of lead in her blood, a test showed last week.

Donna Ogle, her grandmother, has lived on the rim of the Cuyahoga Valley for 50 years. She doesn't want to leave her West Side home, but she wants to protect her granddaughter.

"I'm not going to let her be in jeopardy," Ogle said. "I don't want to leave the house, if they could fix it, but the kids come first."

The Ogles' back yard and two

others were contaminated with lead-tainted fill dirt several years ago. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency made the unsettling discovery last fall, after the Ogles complained about the discolored, smelly dirt.

Master Metals Inc., a lead-smelting company that allegedly generated the soil, scraped the back yards under orders from the EPA. The company will begin sampling for residual contamination next week.

The company has hauled away 169 cubic yards of contaminated dirt. Sampling could result in more digging.

The Cleveland Health Department, which tested the Ogles' blood-lead levels last October, will send a crew to test the lead content of paint and dust in the Ogles' home.

"Even at slightly elevated levels (of lead), you want to remove the

source of exposure," said Theodore J. Esborn, commissioner of the city's Division of Environment.

In October, Sara's lead level tested at 11 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood, just over the 10-microgram level that federal health officials consider elevated. Last week, Sara tested at 12.4 micrograms, her grandmother said.

Persistently high levels of lead can affect a child's behavioral and intellectual development. Research has shown that lead levels of 15 micrograms can have a biological effect, said Dr. Seth Foldy, a family practitioner who has treated lead poisoning.

"There's little reason to believe that a child with that level (of 11 to 12 micrograms) wouldn't have a normal development," Foldy said.

A child with three blood tests showing lead levels in the 10- to 14-microgram range should be tested annually, Foldy said.

The Ogles' lawyer, John Ertle,

said he was concerned that last fall's digging might have generated dust that contaminated the Ogles' house. He said he would talk to Master Metals about paying to lodge the Ogles outside their home.

Master Metals lawyer Robert Casarona said the company was concerned about any health hazard involving the company. "We're unaware of any ongoing health hazard there," he said.

Ertle also questioned the EPA-approved sampling plan, noting that an area where vehicles would be cleaned before leaving is less than 10 feet from the Ogles' front porch.

EPA officials said they would be willing to re-examine any aspects of the plan.

Master Metals officials have blamed a contractor for dumping the dirt. The contractor said a subcontractor did the hauling and had no idea the soil was a hazardous waste.

Pickets

FROM/1-B

health and human services levy, Boyle said the 4.4 mills stated in the levy issue was a misnomer. After so many years of being in place and no increase in the tax dollar, its effec-

such as General Assistance benefits, were shifting the burden of aid to the property tax.

In other action, the commissioners approved a contract for \$889,908 with

The commissioners also heard a report on the need for a 192-bed juvenile detention center. The current Juvenile Detention Home was built to house 26 youngsters. Yesterday it